



## Planning specialized health services - an exercise in consensus and detail

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# Planning specialized hospital services in Denmark

- ERN in a Danish context
- New paradigm: centralize and specialize
- Specialization of functions and master plan
- Goal and criteria of specialty planning
- Current status
- Lessons learned

## ERN in a Danish context

- Recognition and approval of specialized hospital services
- Responsibility - Danish Health and Medicines Authority (DHMA)
- The Danish Healthcare Quality Programme (DDKM):
  - Generate continuous and persistent quality development across entire healthcare sector in a broad sense
  - No role in accrediting or certifying specialized hospital services

# New paradigm: centralize & specialize

- Surgery for colorectal cancer:
  - 2001: 45 dep., ~12/year, 26% >20/year
  - 2012: 16 departments
- Surgery for ovarian cancer:
  - 2002: 52 departments, ST. III: 39% optimal debulking
  - 2012: 5 departments
- Sources of paradigm shift:
  - Structural reform
  - EBM & guidelines
  - Sub-specialization & multi-disciplinary teams
  - Documentation

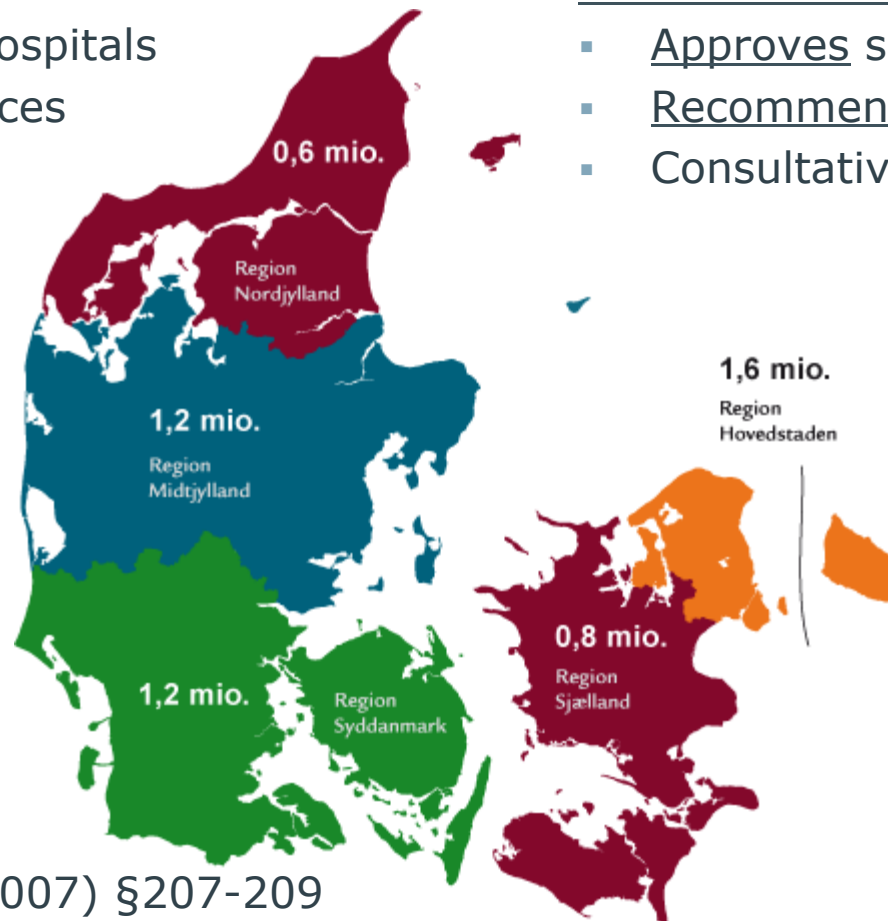
# 5 regions vs. 1 national authority

## Regions:

- Operates public hospitals
- Plans health services
- Contracts private operators

## National authority (DHMA):

- Approves specialized functions
- Recommends basic functions
- Consultative committee



# 36 specialities $\approx$ 1,100 specialized functions

## Basic functions $\approx$ 90%

e.g. diabetes or cataract surgery



## Specialized functions $\approx$ 10%

- **Regional functions**  
@ 1-3 hospitals per region  
  
e.g.: gestational diabetes  
or glaucoma surgery
- **Highly specialized functions**  
@ 1-3 hospitals nationwide  
  
e.g.: pre-gestational diabetes  
or cornea transplant

## Criteria

- Complexity (skills, multi-disciplinary)
- Rarity ("practice makes perfect")
- Resources
  
- Core criteria
  - capacity & stability
  - volume, experience & expertise
  - collaboration & facilities
  - quality & documentation
  
- Secondary criteria
  - research, development & education
  - 24-7 service
  - geography



# Current status

- Master plan implemented 2011
  - continuous small adjustments
  - version 2.0 in 2013-2016
- ~75 highly specialized functions in only one place
  - e.g. decompression sickness, intrauterine blood sampling, extremely dangerous psychiatric patients, Wilson's disease, retinopathy of prematurity
- A few functions not in Denmark
  - e.g. small-intestine transplant, particle radiotherapy, fetal surgery, EC-IC bypass





# Lessons learned

- **Difficulties**
  - creative applications
  - privatization wave
  - ambitious & lost in detail
- **Surprisingly robust**
  - supported by (political) structural reform
  - well-organized and mature professional environment
  - path dependency
  - homogeneity: public = 98% value / 96% volume
  - location & organization, not tied to person
- **Challenges**
  - ICD10, real numbers, monitoring
  - further centralization?
  - quality indicators?

